Celebrating Over 75 Years of Affiliation

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The MRAC is among the oldest ARRL affiliated clubs and has been continuously active since it began.

The year 1994 marked the 75th anniversary of our charter affiliation with the ARRL, which was granted on December 5, 1919. The Milwaukee Radio Amateurs' Club Inc, was founded in 1917 by Loy S. Baird, 9HO. The government ban on the operation of amateur apparatus because of World War I caused our membership to be small until the ban was lifted in 1919. The importance of the League to the general growth of Amateur Radio and the solidarity of our club mandated that we joined with Hiram Percy Maxim in a nationwide effort to promote the advancement of Amateur Radio. Our Milwaukee members and hams worldwide have enjoyed the benefits of ARRL ever since.

The Milwaukee Radio Amateurs' Club has had the good fortune to have many dynamic members over the years. We have had 48 presidents since 1919, some of whom served more than one term. Each administration had a publicity manager to promote the club and the importance of membership in the ARRL. In 1923, we were chartered as a corporation in Wisconsin and in 1926 we started printing the *Badger ARRL News*. We later changed the newsletter's name to *MRAC Hamateur Chatter*. In 1928, the MRAC sponsored the first ARRL Central Division Convention at the Republican Hotel in Milwaukee.

The 1930s brought an on-rush of activity on 5 meters. Our club members took to this band like we do on 2 meters today. *Hamateur Chatter* articles and club meetings were devoted to diagrams and discussion on methods to build small transmitters and receiving converters. A club-sponsored school was started on a large scale to help newcomers get their licenses and master the art of building their own radios. Local QSO contests were developed and the prizes were parts to build radios.

In 1948, our club was host to the ARRL National Convention in Milwaukee and our convention chairman, Jack Doyle, W9GPI, later became the ARRL Central Division director. Public safety and civil defense was a big club activity during the 1950s and '60s because of the atomic age, Korea, and the Cuban missile crisis. We had a Civil Defense radio system and an MRAC emergency corps, and conducted a Civil Defense net twice a week. Growth brought our club membership to 250 and the club received its first call sign: W9HRM. Our radio school is still in full swing and ARRL Field Day has been a yearly event for many years. In July 1967, MRAC sponsored another ARRL Central Division Convention.

During the 1970s, our *Hamateur Chatter* editorial group sponsored a MRAC worked all states contest to promote more participation in the ARRL operating achievement awards program. We demonstrated ham radio at our local shopping malls and at schools in the Milwaukee area.

The 1980s brought a new club call sign, W9RH, which we still use today. Through MRAC public relations, Wisconsin Governor Lee Dreyfus signed documents proclaiming May 17 as Amateur Radio Day in Wisconsin. This notice was displayed yearly at our city hall.

The club has an open repeater on 147.045 MHz, where a net is conducted every Friday night. An emergency weather relay net and other Milwaukee area clubs are welcome to also use the repeater for their needs. Our school, complete with Morse code class and the volunteer examiner testing program, is still going strong. ARRL material is used to help our students gain a better understanding of electronics.

Our club member with the longest span of club activity, J. Travis Baird, W9VQD, joined in 1932. He is presently serving as our 1st vice president. More than 1200 hams and associate members have been in the club since our affiliation. Over 170 are still with us today.

We celebrated our 75th year of affiliation with a special event station on two occasions last year. A special QSL card was designed. It shows a copy of the original charter signed by Hiram Percy Maxim in 1919 with the 75th year information across the top. It was a fun event for all. We're looking forward to our 100th anniversary!

MRAC REVITALIZED

By Fred A. Linn, W9NZF
MRAC Secretary

Over the last two years, members of MRAC have worked hard to revitalize the club and its activities. The club had gone downhill, as many do when their members age, retire, move away or pass away. The first move toward new inspiration was to establish a new board of directors to lead this effort and to take responsibility for finances, programs, membership contact and club-related activities. We had previously established a school and an active volunteer examiner coordinator. This program was designed to bring newly licensed hams into our membership.

We set up a 24-hour informational telephone line, 466-HAMS, to give callers timely bulletins on club activities. MRAC also established a weekly local net on 10 meters as a Friday-night get-together. Later, this net moved to 2 meters.

Our Saturday morning breakfast has become a tradition and gives members a weekly opportunity to meet in person and gives any directors present another chance to swap material or hash out any questions that may have arisen during the week.

MRAC has tried to tailor the programs at our monthly meetings to appeal to a wide audience. These programs comprise of travelogues (DXpeditions), technical presentations on electronic subjects, historical videos related to radio, and speakers and demonstrations. All things considered, it has been a busy couple of years, but it is paying off in increased membership, more activity for the VEC and a lot more youngsters getting into ham radio.

ARRL Special Service Clubs

Administered By Vicky Armentano

Congratulations to the following ARRL Special Service Clubs. This reflects activity during July 1995.

Renewing Special Service Clubs, July 1995
Acadiana ARA, Lafayette, LA
Central Oregon Radio Amateurs, Bend
Clyde ARS, Bellevue, OH
Great Falls Area ARC, MT
Golden Empire ARS, Chico, CA
Gulf Coast ARC, New Port Richey, FL
Gwinnett ARC, Lilburn, GA
Huntsville ARC, AL
Jonesboro ARC, Bono, AR
Motor City Radio Club, Wyandotte, MI
Nashville ARC Inc, TN
Palm Beach ARS, Lantana, FL
Sacramento ARC, CA
San Francisco ARC, CA
Sierra Foothills ARC, Auburn, CA
South Jersey Radio Association, Haddonfield, NJ
Stateline Radio Club, Hillsdale, NJ

New Special Service Clubs, July 1995
Barnstable Radio Club, Hyannis, MA
Marion County ARC, Yellville, AR
New River Valley ARC, Pulaski, VA
Northern Alameda County ARES/RACES, Albany, CA
Pal-Ham Kids, Long Beach, CA
RESPOND of Arkansas, Jonesboro
West Essex ARC, Essex Fells, NJ